

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
**JUNE 15, 2017**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Wescott called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Following the call to order, roll call was taken.

The following Board Members were in attendance:

Present: Chairman Fred S. Wescott  
Vice Chairman Dina M. Getty  
Commissioner Ron Ballard (arrived at 5:54 p.m.)  
Commissioner Alanna D. Conard  
Commissioner James E. Hughes

Absent: Commissioner Pearl Hawks

Also present: Executive Director Alan Zais, Assistant Executive Director Felicia Davis, Finance Director Vickie Huwe and James R. Pirages of the law firm of Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP.

Following roll call, Chairman Wescott led those in attendance in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Introduction of Guests**

None.

**Changes to Agenda**

None.

**Public Comments**

None.

**Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director Alan Zais reminded the Board that his written report had accompanied the Board packets previously provided to the Commissioners. He noted the one item on the Consent Agenda regarding the approval of the conditional commitment for the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA). Alan said that we are in the funding cycle for the Rental Housing Support Program and that for the first time IHDA is requiring Board approval of the commitment letter. He advised that the commitment letter makes provisions for what the WCHA is committing to do under the Program and that the approval of this Resolution is on the Agenda to satisfy IHDA's requirements.

He also noted the mention in his report regarding the damage to one of the WCHA's vehicles, a 2007 Saturn Ion, and asked if the Board had any concerns regarding his proposed handling of that matter (as noted in his written report). The consensus of the Board was that Alan's proposed handling of this matter is appropriate.

Alan also reported on developments at the Rockford Housing Authority (RHA). He noted that from his perspective it appears that things at present are rather chaotic at RHA and that this has resulted in difficulties in dealing with the RHA; he also said that he has heard the same comments from other agencies with regard to their interactions with the RHA. He said that, for example, he has been seeking payment from the RHA of the portability program payments which have typically been made monthly at the beginning of the month. However, he said that WCHA has not yet received the payments for June despite the fact that he has repeatedly asked for the payments. He said that upon asking for the payments he has largely received no response from the RHA. He noted that the RHA has also apparently missed payments to landlords and that while the RHA made a late payment to the Winnebago Homes Association, the WCHA has not received the Section 8 portability payments. Alan noted that the WCHA has several programs in which it is participating along with the RHA and that he is having similar difficulties obtaining RHA's cooperation with regard to the other programs. Commissioner Hughes noted that Alderman Venita Hervey has been appointed to be the Chair of the City Council's Housing Committee by Mayor McNamara. Commissioner Hughes voiced his belief that Alderman Hervey is not supportive of public housing.

Executive Director Alan Zais also noted that he had received a call from Michael at The Workplace (the search firm that is conducting the search for the new Executive Director at RHA). Alan said that Michael had asked Alan if he was interested in the position and Alan had told him "no" but that he had offered to provide assistance to RHA in the interim (citing to Michael the assistance that WCHA has provided in the past or continues to provide to other housing authorities such as Carroll County, Boone County, Freeport, etc.) He said that Michael and he also discussed the Regional Housing Initiative (RHI) and the WCHA's designation as the lead agency for the RHI in our area. He noted that he also told Michael that the WCHA Board has discussed the issues surrounding a possible merger with RHA and that he reviewed a variety of scenarios with Michael as to how that might unfold. Michael indicated that he was going to share this information with RHA Board members Phyllis Ginestra and Jerry Lumpkins. Alan commented that Michael seemed to be aware of much of this information and that he wanted Michael to understand, from a message perspective, that the WCHA is always open to a discussion but that we would need much more detail before proceeding with any sort of further merger-related initiatives.

### **Consent Agenda**

Commissioner Conard made a motion to approve the items on the Consent Agenda; that motion was seconded by Commissioner Hughes. The motion to approve the items on the Consent Agenda was approved by a unanimous roll call vote of all five (5) Commissioners present with none against and one (1) Commissioner absent.

### **Financial Report**

Finance Director Vickie Huwe distributed the financial report. She commented that the WCHA had approximately \$44,000.00 in the bank at the end of the month.

### **Old Business**

None.

### **New Business**

None.

**Commissioner Comments**

Chairman Wescott thanked everyone for their support of the “Hole Hearted for Hospice” fundraiser. He noted that the event cleared \$1,200.00 from gift baskets and that he believed that overall the event might clear \$15,000.00.

Vice Chairman Getty inquired about the status of the name change proposal. Executive Director Alan Zais indicated that he had put this topic on “pause” because of potential problems with the URL (for internet use). He said that there was a concern regarding the URL and where it would lead applicants who were looking for housing if the WCHA was to change its name. He noted that the WCHA is, at the same time, working on its website and that he has been studying how to align a “brand name” with the WCHA’s web presence. He said that through consultant Helen Hill, he had been introduced to a consultant who works with entities on such matters but noted that the consultant had wanted to charge a high price for those services. Alan said that he is continuing to work on this matter and will report further to the Board as to its status in the future.

**Executive Session**

None.

**Action Taken from Executive Session**

None.

**Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the Board meeting was made by Vice Chairman Getty and seconded by Commissioner Hughes. The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous voice vote of the five (5) Commissioners present with none against and one (1) Commissioner absent. The meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Alanna Conard, Recording Secretary